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November 9, 1961

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Head, Department of Genetics
Stanford University Hospital
Palo Alto, California

Dear Josh:

First of all, let me offer my heartiest congratulations to you on your appointment to the President's Advisory Panel on Mental Retardation. It certainly has been exciting to watch your many accomplishments over the years and we are pleased to read about them in the newspapers and periodicals.

By a very strange coincidence I received a phone call from Dr. Nicholas Hobbs, Chairman of the Department of Guidance and Human Development at George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, Tenn. Dr. Hobbs is also Director of Selection for the Peace Corps and works closely with Mr. Sargent Shriver on this program. Dr. Hobbs was one of my professors at Teachers College, Columbia, when I started on my doctorate program and we have been in contact with each other through the years on various professional matters of mutual interest. Dr. Hobbs asked if I would be interested in applying for either of two jobs which are developing within the Kennedy Foundation (Director or Associate Director).

Needless to say I was overwhelmed by the phone call and quite thrilled at the same time that he would recommend me for such consideration. In talking with Dr. Hobbs I gathered that much of the work would be in connection with the newly announced award program of the Kennedy Foundation related to awards for outstanding research in the field of mental retardation. In addition there would be work involving coordination of the activities of the Kennedy Foundation.

I feel very confident of my ability to handle either position and would deem it an honor to be associated with the work of the Kennedy Foundation. Dr. Hobbs asked me to write directly to Mrs. Sargent Shriver and since he did not have her address on hand, indicated that I should contact her care of the Peace Corps in Washington.

Dr. Joshua Lederberg

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I would certainly appreciate any direct or indirect help you could offer (if possible) which would enhance my chances in being considered for the position with the Kennedy Foundation in this program.

If you ever come East, don't forget to let us know. I don't think I have seen you since the AAS in Boston around 1946. We are all just fine out here and I trust the Lederbergs are also in good health.

With cordial best wishes and regards to your good wife.

Sincerely yours,



Henry Platt, Ph.D.
Director, Psychological Training
Institute for Research and Training

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